



The Michigan Kennel License Study

Version 7

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About the Puppy Mill Awareness of Southeast Michigan

Puppy Mill Awareness of Southeast Michigan is working to end the mass production of dogs in commercial kennels, or "puppy mills." Our mission is to educate the public about the cruel cycle of commercial dog breeding and the pet store link. Read more at

<http://michiganpuppymills.yolasite.com/>

A puppy mill, sometimes known as a puppy farm, is a commercial dog breeding facility that is operated with an emphasis upon profits above animal welfare and often provides substandard conditions regarding the care of dogs.

Puppy Mill Awareness has nearly 500 members and has held over 600 events since 2008 including workshops, information booths, lobbying, leafleting and picketing at pet stores. We have also compiled statistics and information about the puppy pet trade including 10,000 photos from the USDA dog breeding facilities, online ads of high volume sellers, and a Michigan Licensed Kennel Study.

About the Kennel Study

Members of Puppy Mill Awareness conducted a study of county and USDA-licensed breeding facilities in Michigan, with the goal of determining how many large-scale breeders are currently operating and would be impacted by any new laws to protect animals in breeding facilities.

Are we a "puppy mill" state?

We started the study by looking at the county kennel licenses. Michigan's Dog Law of 1919, specifically MCL 287.270, gives counties the duty of administering kennel licenses, which are optional in Michigan. We requested a listing of licensed kennels from each of Michigan's 83 counties, including a listing of the number of dogs each kennel was licensed to have. Licensed kennels included those used for breeding, boarding, grooming, animal sheltering, rescue groups, hunting, sled dogs, and show dogs. We received 2009 kennel records for 80 counties totaling 1,947 kennels. Only those with over 15 intact females would be impacted by S.B. 560.

- Of the 685 licensed breeding kennels, approximately 234 were allowed to have over 15 intact breeding dogs.
- Only 3% (20) of all licensed kennels could have over 50 dogs.
- Kennels with an unknown purpose do not show signs of heavy advertising or breeding activity and most of them (85%) had under 15 dogs.

With only 20 kennels allowed to house over 50 dogs, we do not appear to be a “puppy mill” state. We did not find any mega mills where inventories reach from 500-1,000 dogs. Our largest kennels range from 70-130 dogs and three kennels were allowed unlimited numbers.

We know we have our fair share of smaller “backyard breeders” by just looking at the advertisements in the local paper and through our online Ebay/Kijiji Study where local breeders advertise for free, but what about the commercial breeders who rarely advertise and do not sell to the public? Most commercial breeders are located on rural farmers where dogs are kept in barns and often hidden from even the neighbors. They are wholesale breeders licensed to sell puppies to pet stores or brokers. Through the USDA’s online database, we then compiled a listing of Michigan’s USDA Class A licensed dog breeders. We found four in 2009 during the study, but are now down to only two commercially licensed breeders.

Michigan Commercial Breeders (USDA Class A License)

34-A-0182	DANIEL HOCHSTETLER	ST JOSEPH	CENTREVILLE	MI
34-A-0186	MATTHEW SCHWARTZ	BRANCH	QUINCY	MI

Allen Mast’s kennel located in Calhoun County had his license revoked this spring after repeated veterinary care violations and both Hochstetler and Schwartz have had kennel violations over the years. (See case examples below.)

Lastly, we established criteria for situations that might lead to overcrowding, inadequate care, or substandard conditions. These “red flag” kennels were identified as having more than four types of breeds in one facility, heavily advertising in classified ads, marketing designer dogs (combinations such as “Yorkipoos,” Goldendoodles,” and “Puggles”), advertising outside the state of Michigan, or being the subject of animal cruelty investigations by law enforcement authorities. Combined with the possession of a large number of dogs, these facilities appeared to be operating as commercial kennels with a surplus of popular puppies—in short, potential puppy mills. We identified 183 Red Flag kennels

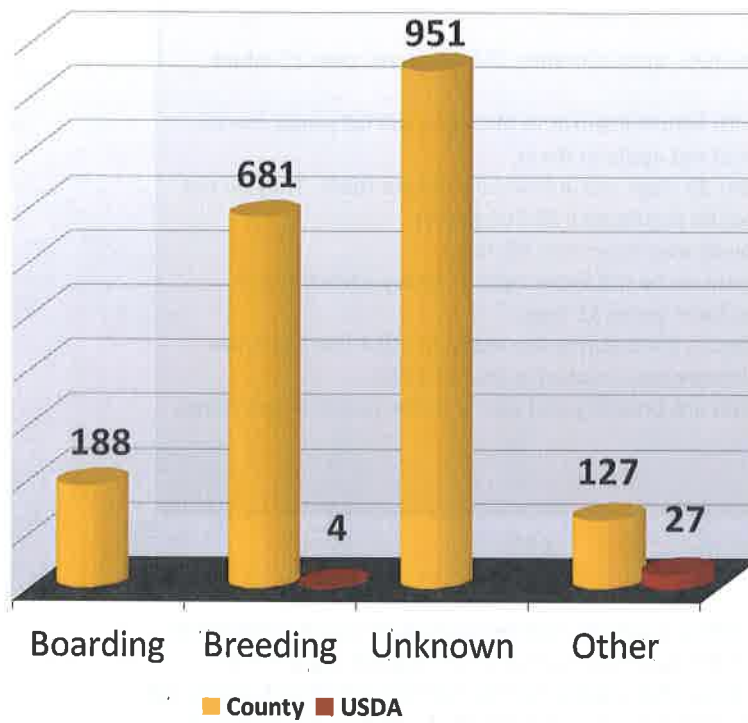
Summary or Results

- Of the 685 licensed breeding kennels, approximately 234 may have over 15 intact breeding dogs.
- At least 65% of dog breeders with kennel licenses in Michigan will fall under the 15 female limit and so the law would not apply to them.
- Most hobby breeders have under 15 dogs and individually license them. They do not have kennel licenses and will not be regulated if SB 560 passes.
- Only 3% (20) of all licensed kennels may have over 50 dogs.
- Kennels with an unknown purpose do not show signs of heavy advertising or activity and most (85%) of them have under 15 dogs.
- Only 4 USDA Class A dog breeders in 2009 during the study. In 2013 there are now only 2 operating. Allen Mast's license was revoked in May of 2013.
- No USDA Class B Dog Dealers that are breeding and selling to the public or pet stores.
- 183 Red Flag kennels

State action is needed

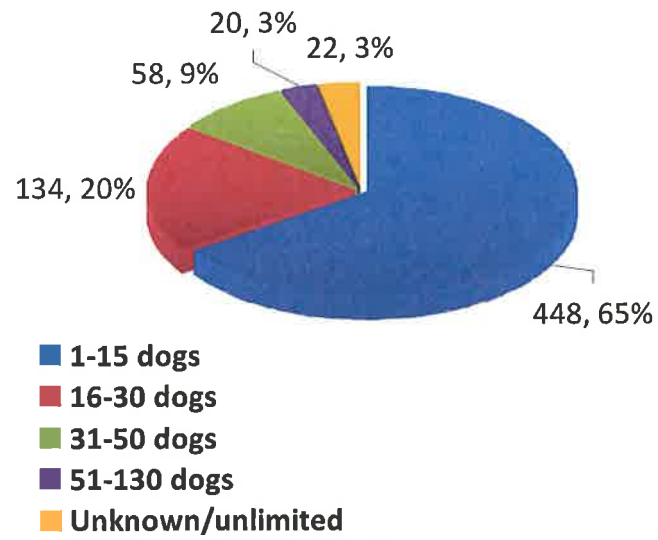
Large-scale commercial breeding operations should be licensed and monitored just like other legitimate businesses in the state. 35 states have laws to license or regulate dog and cat breeders. Our Michigan kennel study shows that approximately 234 licensed kennels would fall under this new law. In 2012 a Metro Detroit area Classified Ads Study showed most internet sellers did not have a county kennel license which means no animal welfare inspections.

Michigan - Number of Dog Kennels by Type (2009)

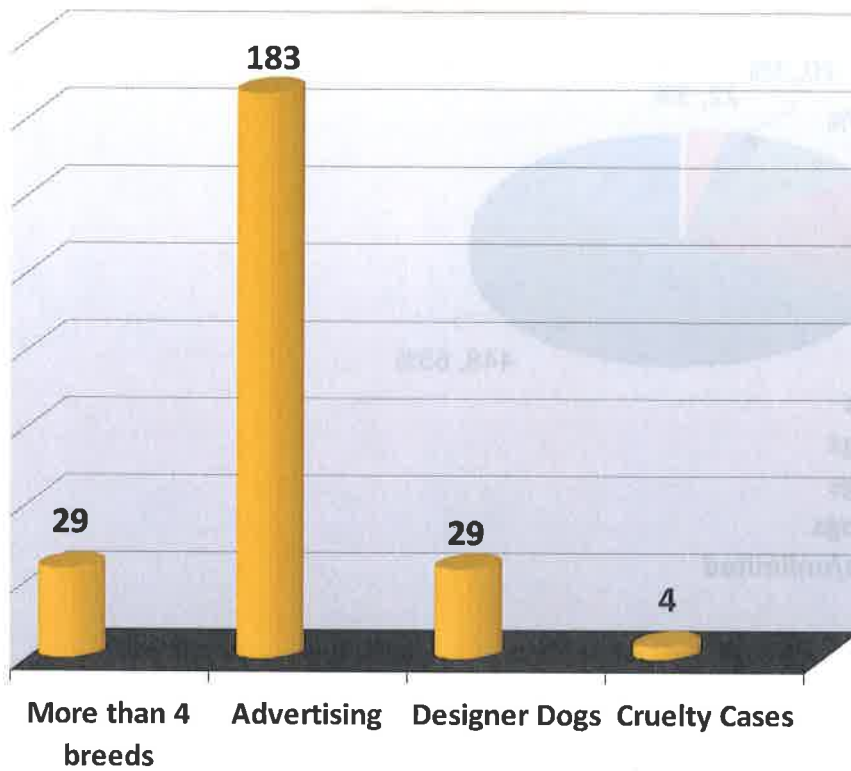


Michigan - Breeding Kennel by Size (2009)

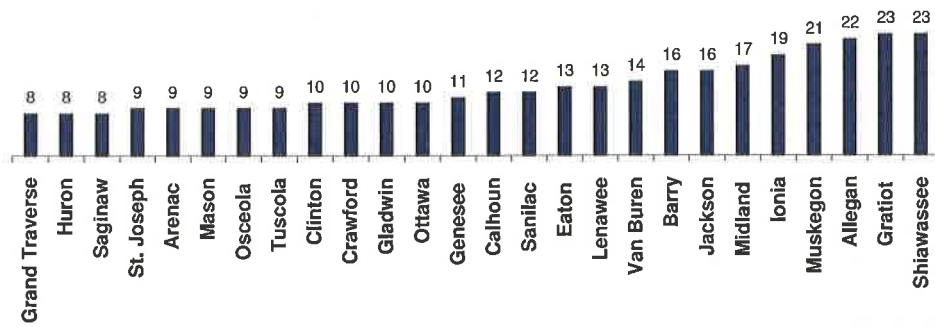
(85% of unknown kennel have <15 dogs)



Michigan – Red Flag Kennels (2009)



Michigan - Number of Licensed Breeding Kennels by County (2009)



Michigan - History of Abuse

Below is a listing of recent animal abuse or seized cases involving Michigan breeding kennels, often with more than 50 dogs in each kennel:

- o 2013 – over a dozen Maltese/Poodles dumped near PetSmart in Troy, Oakland County
- o 2013 – 22 dogs sold and USDA licensed revoked in Calhoun County
- o 2013 – 160 dogs seized from John Jones in Missaukee County
- o 2012 – 350 dogs seized from Cheri and George Burke in Allegan County
- o 2011 – 80 dogs seized from Candace Shepard-Younce in Montcalm County
- o 2011 – 11 dogs seized from James Griffin in Ontonagon County
- o 2011 – 16 dogs taken by rescue group in Newygo County
- o 2011 – 16 cockers dumped in Washtenaw County
- o 2010 – 77 dogs seized from Roxanne Webster in Livingston County
- o 2010 – 37 dogs seized from Don & Kathe Burkett in Washtenaw County
- o 2010 – 24 dogs seized from Laura Springborn in Livingston County
- o 2009 – 70 animals Seized from Kim Koss in Genesee County
- o 2009 – 33 dogs seized from Ackley Kennels in Washtenaw County
- o 2009 – 69 dogs seized from Joan Skillman in Ingham County
- o 2008 – 67 dogs seized from Lori Nichiow (Lornich Kennels) in Macomb County
- o 2008 – almost 60 animals seized from Patrick and Dixie Plunkett in Sanilac County
- o 2007 – 232 dogs seized from John & Suzette Jones in Barry County
- o 2006 – over 80 dogs seized from Virginia Lawrence in Calhoun County
- o 2005 – 79 dogs seized from Pamela Keehbauch in Isabella County

Example Case –2012 Allegan County

In 2012 authorities removed over 350 dogs from a large-scale breeding kennel in Allegan County, Mi that had spiraled out of control. The mother dog shown here is nursing her puppies under her layers of matted feces. The animals were found soaked in urine, with severe dental problems and fleas. Stronger laws and oversight could have prevented this facility from declining to this condition, and could have prevented the significant expenses incurred by local agencies, including the expense of investigation, evidence gathering, animal care and court proceedings.



Example Case –2013 Missaukee County

Some large-scale kennel operators have moved to Michigan counties with no animal control and with under-staffed law enforcement agencies, thereby avoiding inspections and enforcement. SB 560 will help close that loophole and won't leave one county to hide in!

Meet Gorgeous. For five years she has lived with over 160 dogs in a breeding kennel hidden in the woods located in Lake City, Mi. Although she had a name, she didn't have much else: minimal food, water and just a door-less carrier to live in. In the winter, the floor of her kennel becomes solid ice, making it painful to walk across. In the summer, she has no shade. Michigan families would find this unacceptable.



(Photo Credit: Puppy Mill Awareness of SE Michigan)

Example Cases: Commercial USDA Dog Breeders

The bulldog below (left) lives in a barrel on wire floors at a USDA licensed facility in Branch County. Another dog at the same facility has untreated inflammations in his eyes. Under S.B. 560, this kennel would need to make some changes: (1) reduce the number of intact breeding dogs from 85 to 50, (2) Require vaccination, parasite treatment and a health certificate signed by a veterinarian



(Photo Credit: 2010 USDA)

This black female poodle was found dead at a licensed USDA facility in Calhoun County. The licensee had noticed the dog was lethargic and thin for days, but did not seek veterinary care or have the dog humanely euthanized. S.B. 560 requires large-scale breeders must euthanize animals do so humanely in accordance with state law and current American Veterinary Medical Association guidelines.

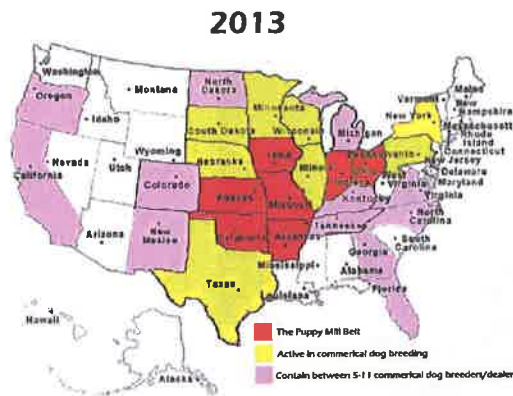


Photographer:	cib	Legal Name:	34-A-0187
Photo Taken:	Mon, Mar 26, '12	ALLEN MAST	
Inspection:	82121508240018		
Description:	dead black female poodle that the licensee had noticed to be lethargic and thin for several days but did not contact the veterinarian for diagnosis and treatment		

One year later, this same kennel was found with more federal violations. In May of 2013, the kennel operator signed a Settlement Agreement agreeing to sell all the dogs in 12 weeks (July 29th deadline) after the USDA revoked his license. Seven days later, Calhoun County Animal Control completed kennel inspection and issued a kennel license to Anna Mast for 16-20 dogs.

Stop Puppy Mills from coming to Michigan

While Michigan is not known as a big “puppy mill” state, with only two USDA-licensed commercial breeders and 20 county-licensed breeders who report owning more than 50 dogs, the Allegan and Missaukee County cases underscores the fact that puppy mills exist here, and that current laws are insufficient to manage them. Moreover, we are very close to the “Puppy Mill Belt,” sharing borders with states that have more than 120 commercial breeders. Having a cap of 50 dogs will help ensure that the largest, most problematic breeding operations do not migrate to Michigan from states that are implementing stronger regulations.



Map created by Puppy Mill Awareness of SE Michigan, based on USDA dog kennel licenses.

Red (1-7) = Puppy Mill Belt

Yellow (8-15) = Active in Commercial Breeding

Pink (16-27) = Contain between 5-11 commercial breeders.

Michigan Ranks 18 with only 9 commercial USDA dog kennels

January 2013				
	A	B	Total	Ranking
MO	613	65	678	1
IA	224	24	248	2
OK	196	9	205	3
KS	169	26	195	4
OH	142	7	149	5
AR	134	12	146	6
IN	120	9	129	7
NE	69	5	74	8
SD	53	9	62	9
TX	34	24	58	10
MN	26	10	36	11
PA	24	10	34	12
NY	26	6	32	13
WI	22	6	28	14
IL	20	5	25	15
VA	9	2	11	16
TN	4	5	9	17
MI	3	6	9	18
FL	2	7	9	19
CO	3	5	8	20
ND	6	1	7	21
NC	3	4	7	22
CA	4	2	6	23
OR	3	3	6	24
NM	1	5	6	25
GA	2	3	5	26
KY	4	1	5	27

October Update: Only two Class A licensees sell dogs wholesale.

Michigan Class B licenses are all research related.

OH and IN are the only states increasing the number of commercial kennels over the last three years.

Example Case: Indiana's large breeders supplying Michigan pet stores

The potential for neglect and inadequate care increases significantly when the number of breeding animals becomes unmanageable. A limit on the number of breeding animals would prevent the introduction of overcrowded, large-scale breeding operations into Michigan as they become more restricted in other states. Four states (VA, LA, OR and WA) currently have caps limiting the number of intact breeding dogs that can be kept at one facility.

Our neighboring states, Indian and Ohio do not have caps and are increasing the number of commercial breeders even with licensing laws being passed. When Indiana initiates their inspections and enforcements, large commercial breeders may migrate to Michigan to more easily supply our pet stores.

This photo was taken in 2012 of one of Michigan's largest pet store suppliers with nearly 200 dogs. Last year, the USDA cited the kennel for repeat direct violations involving veterinary care and unsanitary conditions.



Typical commercial kennel

Photo Credit: 2012 Noble County (Indiana) Zoning Dept.

2010 Pet Paradise Plus Investigation

Sick and dying animals, protests and cruelty charges

STOCKBRIDGE Mich - On December 9, 2010 a Livingston County woman accused of hoarding animals in her home and selling them in her pet store located in Stockbridge, Mich (Ingham County) avoided jail time. Laura Springborn of Gregory was ordered to serve two years of probation in Livingston County Circuit Court. She was facing a felony count of cruelty to ten or more animals, but pleaded guilty to a lesser offense of attempted cruelty to animals. The two year probation terms included with a ban on animals.



In May of 2010, Ingham County Animal Control officials closed her pet store, Pet Paradise Plus, in Stockbridge after an investigation. The investigation began after a customer complained the dog she had purchased had parvovirus. Conditions in the store brought concerned citizens who began protests outside the store. The local investigator then contacted Livingston County Animal Control and officers discovered all of the dogs at her home.



In her home, they found over twenty small breed dogs in unsanitary conditions. Many of the dogs were coated in fecal matter, had visible lesions and inflamed eyes. Some dogs were observed to have been bred repeatedly.

The veterinary examinations showed dogs with thin hair, bad tartar, overgrown toe nails, inflamed eyes, severe skin problems, heartworm positive, mucus discharges from vulva, badly matted fur, fleas, deformations due to untreated injuries, bloody poop, dental disease, and one was missing a bottom jaw.



There were many prior complaints filed regarding her dogs housed in Gregory going back to 2006.

- ☐ 13 dogs, Newfoundlands, St. Bernards, Great Pyrenees. No shade, skinny, not good living conditions.
- ☐ No dog licenses.
- ☐ Running at large, attacking neighbors dog.
- ☐ Too many dogs. Over 10. Breeding dogs, not caring for them. Hearing horrible yelps and crying from home.



